

Dean's Letter, 20 September 2020

Dear Cathedral family, Brothers and Sisters in Christ

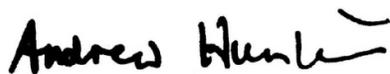
The next few days are taken up, for some of us, with annual governance meetings of the Anglican Church here in southern Africa, i.e., our life and witness as a Province within the Anglican Communion. These begin today (Sunday) with a special service to mark and celebrate the 150th anniversary of the inauguration of the Province of Southern Africa. The preacher is the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Most Reverend Justin Welby. The service will be live streamed on the ACSA Facebook page, starting at 2 p.m.

This service is also the start of the September meeting of the Synod of Bishops. And this, in turn, will be followed by the meeting of the Provincial Standing Committee (PSC). Due to the Covid pandemic, the meetings of the Synod of Bishops and PSC will be conducted virtually, with delegates gathered at their respective diocesan offices. An enormous amount of work has been put into the arrangements for this, to ensure connectivity. I have been part of a couple of "dry runs" with people from all over southern Africa, as we have learned how to be part of this complex gathering. I am one of the PSC representatives for our diocese, and have also been asked to be part of the Secretariat, a team of four who are tasked with capturing the proceedings. So it will be a busy and intense few days, starting on Tuesday midday until the end of Thursday this week. The agenda looks interesting and reflects the diverse and complex context in which we as the people of God live and witness. My brief letter cannot do justice to the many issues facing us. The nature of these Provincial meetings is to engage and listen and, where possible, to provide clarity and direction. I shall try in the weeks ahead to touch on some of the more significant matters that will have come before us.

Please pray for Revd Richard Wyngaard as he is licensed and installed as the new school chaplain at St Andrew's, this evening. I am also praying about the way forward for our choir and music ministry in general, once we return to gathered worship; and the challenges of the ongoing live streaming of services, once we reopen the Cathedral.

Our readings today speak of the unmerited grace of God. Jonah is sent to the pagan city of Nineveh, and is the example of a reluctant prophet. It takes three days in the belly of a whale – a metaphor of a tomb – for him to rediscover his vocation and calling to go where God sends him, even if it is to the undeserving gentiles, enemies of Israel. The parable of the labourers in the vineyard (Matthew 20) is also about God's undeserving grace, given regardless of merit or worth. God's mercy is greater than our harsh judgement and condemnation of one another. The book of Jonah ends with a question from God to Jonah: "And should I not be concerned about Nineveh, that great city...?" God's love reaches beyond the boundaries that we set in place.

My love to you all

A handwritten signature in black ink that reads "Andrew Hunt". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping underline.